

VEDANTA

THE FAITH OF THE YOGIS
WHICH WASHINGTON HAS TAKEN UP.

Albert S. Dulin

Followers Believe That They May Become
Immune From Disease and Reach
the Age of One Hundred and
Twenty-five Years.

VEDANTA, the newest and at the same time the oldest philosophy of the world, has now invaded Washington. A university of Vedanta, which has as its purpose the instruction of all those in the National Capital who are interested in the philosophy, has been established here, with Albert S. Dulin at its head.

"Through this philosophy it is claimed men may become immune from disease, may realize the true meaning of 'brotherly love,' may become possessed of such psychic powers as have astonished the world, and may live to be 125 years old without being abnormally long-lived.

Only a decade ago Swami Vivekananda came from the Far East to attend the congress of religions at the Chicago World's Fair. As each man representing the various religions of the world arose and set before the convention the beliefs for which men have fought and died since the days of Adam, it came the turn of the young sage from India. When he unfolded the Vedanta philosophy his hearers sat amazed, interested beyond belief, and before he concluded it was whispered that if he should continue his teachings in this country there would be a dearth of Christian missionaries will to go to the East, where already this wonderful religion has a firm footing. While the Vedanta, which is practically the faith of the Indian yogis, and has to do largely with the practice of yoga, has been known in its various component parts in India for ages, yet it was only as long ago as 1840 that the new religion sprang into existence under the leadership of an enthusiast who determined to fight the corruptions which had gradually crept into the church. Since then thousands of Indians have answered the call, and Vedanta, the pure faith, is supplanting the older priest-ridden forms.

Vedanta in New York.

Since the stirring address delivered by Swami Vivekananda in Chicago, Vedanta has gradually gained a footing in the United States until there is now in New York a circle of Vedantists 700 strong. Men of science and letters have found an engrossing interest in the teachings of the new faith. Prof. Parker, of the Columbia University, is among the number. But in Washington Vedanta is practically new. The university, which has been regularly incorporated under the law, began its operations only a few short weeks ago. Already forty persons have registered, and are taking a course which teaches them the new philosophy. As Vedanta is a universal religion—it accepts the best in every religion in the world and teaches active co-operation with all the various sects and creeds—its followers argue that members of all churches or of no church at all may study the philosophy with a quiet conscience.

Although Swami Vivekananda is no longer in this country, he has left behind an able teacher in the person of Swami Abhedananda. This Hindu sage has written many volumes on the subject of Vedanta and has lectured in most of the cities of the Union. Mr. Dulin expects him to come to Washington this winter to deliver lectures and to aid in the firm establishment of the cult here.

Vedanta is the name given to the sacred scriptures of India, and "anta" is the Hindu word for end. From these two words the name of philosophy is derived. Vedanta in this case is not taken to mean scripture, but rather that which scriptures are supposed to contain—wisdom. The name Vedanta therefore implies the end of wisdom. Moreover the philosophy explains what the true end of wisdom or learning is, and how it may be attained. That end is reached when the pupil realizes the unity or oneness of the individual soul with the god of the universe or universal spirit. The methods whereby this knowledge is gained is called yoga, the name which has for ages been given to the practices of the Indian sages, and is derived from the Sanskrit word yug, which means yoke, and as such is preserved for us in the English word, Under the circumstances, it is a very appropriate name.

The Essentials of Religion.

So much for a name. It may be said, however, that few religions or philosophies have been so aptly named. The apostles of Vedanta, while teaching a religion, have cut off from it what has

been termed the unessential part of religion. Doctrines, dogmas, rituals, ceremonies, and mythologies are designated as unessential in religion. But while Vedanta does not proclaim dogmas or doctrines, it nevertheless does not make war upon them, recognizing the fact that they do an immense good in certain stages of progress. But that a man or woman may be spiritually religious without performing the ceremonies laid down by the Scriptures or any religious hierarchy is firmly maintained by them. The essentials of true religion, it is claimed, are self-knowledge and self-control. Self-knowledge means the knowledge of the divine nature of man, and self-control is the restraint of the lower self or selfish nature. The first can only be attained when the selfish nature has been completely subjugated.

"Know thyself" has been a catchword since the days of the Greek philosophers who wrote the words above the doors of their temples; it has been a common maxim in the mouths of wise men of all ages, but few have made a religion of the phrase. So seldom has self-knowledge been attained that it has become the custom to say that man never knows himself as well as others know him. Possibly the world means by this that no man knows himself as others see him. But self-knowledge does not end with the recognition of one's own shortcomings or abilities. It means that man, the individual, must realize that he is part of the great universal spirit that governs the universe. With the endeavor to reach absolute control of the self whereby perfect self-knowledge may be had the yoga system was developed.

Power of Concentration.

By concentration and meditation the true man gains wonderful control over his mind and body. As he progresses through the various stages he finally has the power to control not only the voluntary muscles, but also the so-called involuntary muscles, such as the heart and lungs. The power of mind over matter, mind over the body in the case of a man, has long been known to physicians and the world in general. But so great is the power of the concentrated mind of a yogi that there is as much difference between it and the power exercised by the scattered mind of the ordinary individual as there is between the light of an extremely powerful searchlight and that of a common oil lamp.

The young University of Vedanta is established in comfortable quarters on Sixteenth Street. There under the direction of the regent, Mr. Dulin, the students are striving to attain that proficiency in concentration possessed by the yogis of India and a few of the followers of Vedanta in this country. The regent has a striking personality. Neither tall nor short but thick through he gives the appearance of much physical strength. A well-developed head, brown hair, mustache and imperial, and large, blue eyes made still larger by powerful eyeglasses completes the outward picture of the man. He speaks easily and fluently of the topic in hand and is never at a loss for a word or an explanation. While he has been a student of the Vedanta philosophy for years Mr. Dulin has been actively engaged as a newspaper man and politician, and even took a prominent part in the last Presidential campaign.

No Quarrel With Other Religions.

"We have no quarrel with any other religion or creed whatsoever," said Mr. Dulin. "In fact we realize the good in each different faith. And what is good in each one is also found in Vedanta. But taking the religions of the world in turn you will find that all of them are in a loss for a word or an explanation. Out from the rest by reason of a great personality. These have been the prophets who have been listened to and believed when they preached great truths. Mohammed was such a one, and about his personality was built the religion of the Mohammedans. Christianity hinges upon the personality of Christ, Buddhism upon that of Buddha. And so on throughout the list it will be found that some personality has laid an indelible stamp upon the religion. The followers of these different religions become attached to the personality of the founder and refuse to recognize the truths preached by the others. This has caused strife since the beginning of time and continues to do so to this very day."

Vedanta, on the other hand, depends upon no individual. It embraces all the great truths and establishes a universal religion.

"I am reminded of the story of the four blind men who came upon an elephant in the woods and attempted each to describe it. One feeling of the elephant's trunk said, 'Low, the elephant is like a club.' The second blind man touched the ears of the great beast and declared it to be like piece of leather. Clapping one huge leg of the elephant the third man said he resembled a tree, while the fourth man felt of the elephant's stomach and said he was like a sack. Immediately the four blind men fell to fighting among themselves because they each refused to accept the belief of the others. A man who could see happened along and saw them fighting. He clucked them apart and asked what the trouble was. When each had told his story the man who could see explained to them that each had a grain of truth in his idea of the elephant, but that the elephant was in reality like none of the objects selected by the four. Vedanta is like the man who sees."

How to Practice Yoga.

Bright sunshine pours into the room in which Mr. Dulin practices yoga himself. Windows on three sides and a skylight help to make the room cheerful, which he says aids greatly to the effect. In one corner is a small skeleton chair which he calls his yoga chair. It is straight-backed and would prove anything but comfortable for library use, but there is little chance of anyone leaving his attention wonder so far afield while sitting in it that he would fall asleep. In any sense of the term, for this reason the chair is all the more valuable for the practices of yoga. Seated on this chair or standing the regent goes through thirty minutes of concentrated mental and muscular exercises every morning and afternoon. These exercises consist largely of assuming more or less strained postures and in regulating the breath. Standing straight as a soldier on parade Mr. Dulin illustrated the exercises. Placing one hand over his right nostril he drew in slowly a deep breath through his left nostril rising on his toes as he did so. When he had filled his whole lungs he closed the left nostril too and still on tip toe he held his breath for about thirty seconds. Then opening his right nostril he exhaled slowly. This exercise is repeated seven times and then the breath is drawn in through the right nostril and exhaled through the left. Another exercise consists in rising on the toes and at the same time placing the outstretched arms above the head with hands clasped and also drawing a deep breath which is held for a number of seconds. Still other breathing exercises are taken while sitting on the yoga chair.

Breathing Affects Mental Activity.

"I drive each breath into every part of my body or into such part as my will designates," said Mr. Dulin. "My attention is concentrated directly upon what I am doing. The motion of the lungs has a very intimate relation to the activity of the mind. If we control the motion of the lungs the activity of the mind comes more easily under control. Conversely, if we control the activity of the mind we can also control the motion of the lungs. When the motion of the lungs is brought under perfect control, every organ of the body is brought under the control of the spirit. Have you ever noticed that at the time of perfect concentration of mind the rhythm of respiration changes and gradually becomes slower and slower; perhaps it will almost cease for the time being. It has been said by a clever and experienced thinker, Dr. Lewes, that to acquire the power of attention is to learn to make our mental adjustments alternate with the rhythmic movements of respiration.

"How intimately breathing is connected with life is apparent to any who stop to think of the so-called phenomena of living. As soon as breath ceases the very body itself disintegrates. "When supreme control over attention is acquired by voluntary effort, it is possible to fix one's attention on any part of the body and experience strange sensations and wonderful phenomena. It is a well-known fact that one can easily experience pain in any part of the body merely fixing the attention upon that part. By an analogous process one can get rid of pain in the body. Mental healers, many of whom surround their practices with all manner of mysticism, are familiar with such phenomena, although they fail to understand the true inwardness of their cures. One can cure disease by fixing attention on the diseased part, and sending an opposite current of thought. This method has become a common practice with Christian Science healers, and other mental healers under a variety of names."



Franklin D. Roosevelt

Swami Vivekananda

"But one thing should be remembered in this connection. It is that each individual is born with this kind of healing power himself or herself. No one can give you that power. It is one of the natural powers of the human mind. It is far better to heal yourself than to go to some other person for a cure, which, at best, is only temporary. Do not let your mind be controlled by any other mind. Men and women who go to mental healers or Christian Scientists to let them do for them what they can do for themselves, are not realizing that, by allowing themselves to fall under the hypnotic power of stronger minds, they are walking in a path which leads to mental degeneration. Many cases have been known where minds have degenerated into the slaves of other minds, losing all power of self-control. How pitiable is the mental condition of these self-deluded ones."

"Because a yogi comprehends this danger he never allows himself to be influenced by the minds of others. And for the same reason he is careful about attempting a cure of his fellow-beings. While through perfect concentration it is possible to cure an ill person other than himself the yogi rarely attempts this, knowing the danger to which he is submitting the patient. Vedanta teaches the power which is latent in every human being for self-cure. We could, however, cure others, and have done so in extreme cases such as fever, which could reduce a high fever in two hours by the power of concentration."

"But if yoga is rightly practiced it should prove a preventive rather than a cure for disease. Anyone who is practicing yoga daily should be in a state of perfect health. It gives immunity from disease. Since I have practiced yoga I have never been ill for a moment. It hardens the physical system to such an extent that it can combat with ease the so-called germs of disease. Germs? What are germs any way but the creation of the human mind just as that folding bed over there is the invention of a human mind. I would be willing to eat all the bacteria you bring me and feel no fear of an evil effect."

"If that is the case and the whole human race should take up the practice of yoga the average age of man would be greatly advanced would it not?" Mr. Dulin was asked.

"Undoubtedly, replied he. 'The effect of yoga upon longevity is marked. Man should live to be 125 years old.' Mr. Dulin has picked the age which the Russian scientist, Metchnikoff, selected for the average length of life of man. According to the Russian, however, man is to attain this great age by living largely on buttermilk and a wonderful bacillus discovered by him."

Four Divisions of Yoga.

There are four grand divisions of yoga, and each division is suited to a different tendency of mind. The first division of yoga is called Karma Yoga. It is for the active man, for those who like to work, the busy everyday working man. It is largely the science of physical culture. By this means the true science of physical culture which

depends upon the concentration of the mind upon work in hand as well as the mere going through with certain exercises. Karma Yoga teaches the secret of work, and shows how to turn the duty tasks into acts of worship. Thus man may reach perfection of life through work and work alone.

Bhakti Yoga is the name given the second division. It is for such as are of an emotional nature. It teaches how ordinary emotions may bring forth a spiritual unfoldment of the highest kind and lead to the ultimate ideal of all religions.

It explains the nature of divine love. The third division is Raja Yoga, which has to do with the whole realm of psychic phenomena. By its psychic powers are developed such as have astonished the world since the beginning of history, and which have been termed miracles by the uninitiated. This division includes the evolving of the fine perceptions, the projection out of the body of the power of life, the curing of disease and all the physical powers displayed by Jesus, and are in use by the Christian Scientists today. These phenomena have been known and understood by the yogis of India since ancient times. While Raja Yoga teaches all these psychic powers it does not fail to warn its students that they are not the true end of wisdom nor a sign of spirituality.

"Little brains and weak intellects easily turn away from the path of spiritual truth when some psychic power begins to manifest itself," said Mr. Dulin. "They think they have reached the highest state of spirituality because they have the power of curing a headache." Jana Yoga is the fourth division or method. It is for the intellectual, discriminative and philosophical man.

Value of Yoga in Business.

"Of what tremendous value Vedanta proves to business men can readily be understood aside from its spiritual value," continued Mr. Dulin. "In these days of competition it is the man who can concentrate upon his work and perform it, shutting out all other interests, who goes to the front most rapidly. The practice of yoga demands con-

centration before everything. The habit of concentration grows greater as the practice of yoga continues. For example, I can today accomplish in a few hours what would have a few years ago required several days of hard work."

"Vedanta explains the true basis of ethics. Why should we be moral? Not because it is written in a certain chapter of a certain Scripture, but because of the spiritual oneness of the universe. When you at last realize that you are part and parcel of the whole godlife of the universe you know that if you injure another you injure yourself, and no man does anything to himself unless he firmly believes for the time being, at least, that it is for his good. No criminal commits a crime without thinking that he is to benefit thereby. Vedanta shows that because of this same spiritual oneness we should love our neighbors as ourselves, since in spirit we are already one."

"Thirst for enjoyment is the real disease in us. Its various symptoms are passions, ambition, pride, jealousy, hatred, anger, and all the rest. Tremendous mental exertion of will power is often necessary to control the restless mind from taking the forms of waves of passion and anger. Perfect self-control of a yoga is that state of mind in which no desires or passions of any kind disturb the peace and tranquillity of his soul. Such a state of mind can be acquired more easily by removing the bubbles of desires before they take wave form of passion, that is, by attacking them while they are in their incipient. By concentration and meditation upon the supreme truths the desires may be brought under complete control."

Vedanta teaches that the soul never dies, that the soul of each individual man is part of the divine power usually termed God. It teaches also that the soul of man will return to this earth in various incarnations which represent the different stages of advance toward that perfection of being which is the true goal. Mr. Dulin said that the practice of yoga is materially aided by a vegetarian diet.

Philosophy Is Based Upon the Vedas, or
Sacred Scriptures of India, and It
Accepts the Best in Every
Religion.

Swami Abhedananda

Stories Told by and of Members of Congress

One of Virginia's Representatives tells this good story about A. B. Woodward, appointed chief justice of Michigan Territory, by President Jefferson:

Woodward was an old bachelor, an advocate of race suicide, and was one of the most peculiar men Virginia ever produced.

In those days shirts were made with a whole lot of frills and laces on the fronts, and it was Woodward's custom to buy an even dozen of these at a time. He would put on one of the dozen, wear it until it became soiled, then put on another one, and so on until he had the entire dozen shirts on.

When the last was soiled, he would peel it off and let the next shirt do duty for a few days, then slip it off and expose another for service. When the dozen shirts had thus done double duty, he would go to bed until the shirts were washed and ironed and then go through the same process of shirt wearing.

"Now," says the Representative, "this is a pretty stretchy shirt yarn, but it is said to be sold fact. And to make it worse, old Woodward never changed his undershirt until it was worn out. I am glad to say he is the only Virginian I ever read of who practiced this manner of beating the washer woman."

A Lincoln Story.

"Did you ever hear Mr. Lincoln's lightning rod story?" asked Speaker Cannon of some friends who were spinning yarns. "Well, it's a good one. "Mr. Lincoln said he had attended meeting at a country church where one of the sturdiest creatures on God's footstool went through the make-me-good idea he was worshipping the Savior. The minister asked for a free contribution to enable the church fathers to buy a lightning rod for the edifice.

"Surely you are willing to lend to the Lord," said the minister. "Is it not the owner of the cattle on a thousand hills? Will He not repay?"

"This was the chance for the old miser to get in his work by giving a reason for not contributing. Rising in his seat, he said:

"The cattle on a thousand hills. Then, why can't He sell some of the cattle and buy a lightning rod?"

Just Enough to Last.

Representative Henry of Connecticut hands this one out as a holiday yarn:

"It has been said that the best husbands in the United States are raised in my State, and I don't think the whipping-post is needed there. However, I did hear a story once about a skintight citizen which if true entitled him to a little hickory tea.

"It is alleged that the man's wife was very ill and had been for a long time. The druggist's bill dug down pretty deep in the jeans of the stingy individual.

"A few days before the death of the good wife the husband went to the druggist with an empty four-ounce bottle to have it refilled with a solution of hydrate of iron, of which the sick woman had required a great quantity. He handed the bottle to the druggist, asking:

"Is that chloral as expensive as ever?"

"The price is the same, sir," was the answer.

"Sixty cents to fill the bottle. Great Gosh."

"Well, you just put it half full this time, for the doctor said the old woman can't last but a day or so longer."

A Spoiled Meeting.

"At a revival meeting in one of the negro churches in my district," says Representative Gilbert, of the Blue Grass State, "a number of ladies and gentlemen attended. The meeting was protracted for several hours—an all day session, you might say.

"The atmosphere became decidedly unpleasant; the brethren and sisters grew fearfully excited, and the perspiration flowed in streams from the exhorting and shouting members. It was a case of faint or retire with the ladies, and the leader, a big curly negro, was approached by one of the gentlemen and requested that an opening be made so

that the party of 'visiting white friends' could get out.

"With great promptness the leader called out in stentorian voice:

"Make way, dere, brethren, make way! Miss Callie an' Miss Mary can't stan' dis no longer. You niggers wit dat musk an' camp-meeting draps jis spiles de whole of de meetin'."

Bait for the Devil.

This fish story is substantiated by Representative Hardwick of Georgia:

A Methodist preacher had made himself exceedingly unpopular with the young people of his denomination by an effort to put the ban on every amusement, no matter how innocent. He even went so far as to say that the man or woman who said there was a Santa Claus was a deliberate and wicked liar.

"The youngsters had no earthly use for the minister. One Sunday afternoon he took a stroll in the outskirts of the little country town and discovered several boys fishing.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

"Fishin'," came the answer.

"Fishing on Sunday?"

"Yep."

"And what are you fishing for?"

"For the minister."

"What kind of bait are you using?"

"Methodist preachers."

A Proven Christian.

One of the best stories of the season is told by Representative Mudd of Maryland, and it runs this way:

During his campaigning tour the Representative attended religious services at a country meeting house. The man who officiated in the pulpit was an independent old farmer, who said just what he thought, and thought just what he said. In the course of his sermon he said:

"My friends, while I agree with old man Moses in a great many things, I must differ from him in some points. I must say that the constitution which he gave them Jews was anti-republican, and against universal freedom. I know some of you think and say I am no

Christian, but I am a Christian, my friends. The Old Testament is the constitution of the church, and the New Testament is the by-laws. I goes in for the by-laws all the time, neighbors."

Just So Far.

In the early part of the Presidential campaign Representative Clayton of Alabama was doing a little missionary work in one of the border counties of Tennessee.

"One day," says the Representative, "I was riding along and met a small boy who had about the dirtiest face hung to him of any kid I ever saw. The under part of his face was moderately clean, but around the eyes and forehead resembled a locomotive fireman's."

"Bub, why don't you wash your face?" I asked.

"I did—this mornin'—came the answer."

"Then, why didn't you wipe it?"

"I did—just as far as my shirt would reach."

Ode to the Frog.

Minnesota is the chief frog producing State in the Union, and one Representative from that State has composed the following lines on the tasty tid bit: Of all the funny things that live, In wood, and marsh, or bog, That creep the ground, or fly the air, The funniest is the frog.

The frog—the "scientificest" Of Nature's handy-work; The frog, that neither walks nor runs, But goes it with a jerk.

With 'pants' and coat of bottle-green, A yellow fancy vest, He plunges into mud and mire, All in his 'Sunday best.' When he sits down, he's standing up, As Paddy Quinn once said; And for convenience sake, he wears His eyes a-top his head.

You see him sitting on a log, Above the vasty deep, You feel inclined to say, 'Old chap, Just look before you leap.' You raise your cane to hit him on His ugly-looking head, But ere you get it half way up, Adown he goes—kerchug!